

CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, MAY 11, 2015

7:30 PM

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Finch called the meeting to order at 7:37 p.m.

PRAYER

Mayor Finch then requested Council Member Taylor-Moye to lead those present in prayer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Finch then requested Council Member Casco to lead those present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

City Clerk Hudson called the roll.

The following members were present:

130th District: Susan Brannelly, Enrique Torres
131st District: Jack O. Banta, Denese Taylor-Moye
132nd District: Patricia Swain
133rd District: Thomas McCarthy, Howard Austin
134th District: AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Michelle Lyons
135th District: Richard Salter, Rev. Mary McBride-Lee
136th District: Josè Casco, Alfredo Castillo
137th District: Milta Feliciano, Lydia Martinez
138th District: Michael Marella, Melanie Jackson
139th District: Eneida Martinez, James Holloway

A quorum was present.

MATTERS TO BE ACTED UPON

71-14

**a,b,c,d,e Budget and Appropriations Committee Report re: General Fund Budget
for Fiscal Year 2013-2014 -Votes as follows:**

City of Bridgeport
City Council
Special Meeting
May 11, 2015

General Fund:

- a. Revenue Increases**
- b. Revenue Decreases**
- c. Appropriation Increases**
- d. Appropriation Decreases**

General Fund: a. Revenue Increases

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ITEM:**

GENERAL FUND INCREASES

Pursuant to the City Charter, the City Council shall have the power to increase any item in said budget or add new items to said budget only on a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the entire membership of the Council.

Budget & Appropriations Committee Vote of General Fund Revenue Increases

There are adjustments to the Mayor's Proposed Budget for general fund purposes as detailed by the City Council's Budget & Appropriations Committee.

ORG	ORGANIZATION	APPROP	DESCRIPTION	2016 MAYOR PROPOSED	2016 BAC APPROVED	CHANGE
01010	COMPTRROLLER'S OFFICE	41278	MUNICIPAL ID REVENUE	0	200,000	200,000
01450	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	41083	BLIGHT FINES	0	103,930	103,930
Total Revenue Increases				0	303,930	303,930

LEGISLATIVE INTENT REVENUE INCREASES

01010 41278 - The legislative intent is to establish a new program for constituents to be able to acquire a municipal identification badge. The program is similar to those operating in other major cities. The program needs to be studied and created as a function of a current City department. Once that department is determined, an appropriation, reserved in this budget, will be transferred and set up in that department to begin this new operation.

01450 41083 - The legislative intent is to capture the blight operation fine revenues obtained for blighted structures and/or properties in the General Fund. An appropriation has also been established in the Economic Development appropriation group.

****COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY SECONDED.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA MOVED TO AMEND THE LEGISLATIVE INTENT FROM:**

01010 41278 - The legislative intent is to establish a new program for **constituents** to be able to acquire a municipal identification badge. The program is similar to those operating in other major cities. The program needs to be studied and created as a function of a current City department. Once that department is determined, an appropriation, reserved in this budget, will be transferred and set up in that department to begin this new operation.

TO:

01010 41278 - The legislative intent is to establish a new program for **possible new residents / undocumented persons** to be able to acquire a municipal identification badge. The program is similar to those operating in other major cities. The program needs to be studied and created as a function of a current City department. Once that department is determined, an appropriation, reserved in this budget, will be transferred and set up in that department to begin this new operation.

**** THE MOTION TO AMEND THE GENERAL FUND REVENUE INCREASES PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE GENERAL FUND REVENUE INCREASES AS AMENDED PASSED WITH EIGHTEEN IN FAVOR (BRANNELLY, BANTA, TAYLOR-MOYE, SWAIN, MCCARTHY, AUSTIN, LYONS, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, SALTER, CASCO, CASTILLO, L. MARTINEZ, FELICIANO, MARELLA, JACKSON, E. MARTINEZ AND HOLLOWAY) AND ONE OPPOSED (TORRES).**

GENERAL FUND DECREASES

Pursuant to the City Charter, the City Council Budget & Appropriations Committee reports its changes to the Council as a whole in the form of budget amendment resolution. The City Council has the power to reduce or delete any item in the budget recommended by the Mayor by a majority vote of the council members present and voting.

CITY COUNCIL VOTE NUMBER – 71-14 (b)

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ITEM:**

Budget & Appropriations Committee Vote of General Fund Revenue Decreases

NO DECREASES TO GENERAL FUND REVENUES

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

GENERAL FUND INCREASES

Pursuant to the City Charter, the City Council shall have the power to increase any item in said budget or add new items to said budget only on a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the entire membership of the council.

CITY COUNCIL VOTE NUMBER – 71-14 (c)

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ITEM:**

Budget & Appropriations Committee Vote of General Fund Appropriation Increases

There are adjustments to the Mayor's Recommended Budget for general fund purposes as detailed by the City Council Budget & Appropriations Committee.

ORG#	ORGANIZATION	APPR. UNIT	DESCRIPTION	2016 MAYOR PROPOSED	2016 BAC APPROVED	CHANGE
01035000	PURCHASING	04OP 01035	PURCHASING OPER EXP	5,910	10,910	5,000
01055000	OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK	04OP 01055	CITY CLERK OPER EXP	23,552	28,552	5,000
01450000	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	04OP 01450	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPER EXP	87,250	117,250	30,000
01450000	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	05SS 01450	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SPEC SVC	390,892	494,822	103,930
01610000	OTHER FINANCING USES	06FU 01610	OTHER FINANCING OTHER FIN USES	2,021,217	2,221,217	200,000
01801000	BOARD OF EDUCATION	01PS 01801	CLASSROOM PERSONNEL SVCS	25,698,708	25,895,916	197,208
01860000	BOARD OF EDUCATION	01PS 01860	SCHOOL NURSES PERSONNEL SVCS	1,589,446	2,397,707	808,261
	Total Appropriation Increases			29,816,975	31,166,374	1,349,399

LEGISLATIVE INTENT APPROPRIATION INCREASES

01035 04OP01035 - The legislative intent is to increase the Mayor's proposed budget value for the lease and maintenance service of a copier in the Purchasing Department.

01055 01OP01055 - The legislative intent is to increase the Mayor's proposed budget value for the lease and maintenance service of a copier in the Office of the City Clerk.

01450 04OP01450 - The legislative intent is to increase the Mayor's proposed budget value for the Office of Economic Development to provide funds dedicated to security, maintenance and preservation of the Poli-Majestic Theatre building.

01450 05SS01450 - The legislative intent is to increase the Mayor's proposed budget value for the Office of Economic Development to provide funds for clean-up of blighted properties and/or the removal/securing/demolition of blighted structures. The budget contains an offsetting revenue account for fines in this council resolution.

01610 06FU01610 - The legislative intent is to establish reserve funding for a Municipal ID system. A study needs to be performed in order to analyze what is needed, which department to house the program in, and then transfer these funds from a dedicated reserve to the designated service department. The budget has an offsetting revenue account for the purchase of identification badges.

01853 01PS01853 – The Legislative intent is increase the Mayor’s proposed budget value for the Board of Education to provide funds that will provide for Academic Interventionists. This was a top priority presented by the Superintendent of Schools if additional funding were available. Per the BOE’s budget presentation this would equate to the funding for 27 interventionists, for 40 weeks, paid on a per diem basis.

01860 01PS01860 – The Legislative intent is increase the Mayor’s proposed budget value for the Board of Education to provide funds that will provide for a school nurse in every school. This was the top priority presented by the Superintendent of Schools if additional funding were available. Per the BOE’s budget presentation this would equate to the funding for 10.6 nurses.

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY SECONDED.**

Council Member E. Martinez then asked if there Classroom Personnel SVCs and the School Nurse program funding was going to those two line items. SB said that she had intended to address this. At this time, the Council has a good relationship with the Board of Education. SB said that the Committee hoped to start working on legislative action regarding the State allocation.

Council Member Halstead joined the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Council Member E. Martinez said that she would like to have this in writing. Council Member Brannelly said that she had received an email from Interim Superintendent Rabinowitz about this. Interim Superintendent Rabinowitz came forward and said that she appreciated the trust that the Council Members were demonstrating towards the Board.

Council Member L. Martinez said that she was excited about the Board and that there were good things happening for Bridgeport school children.

Council Member McBride-Lee then spoke about the impact of the interventionist for the students and said that she believed that Interim Superintendent Rabinowitz would spend the funding as designated. She thanked Interim Superintendent Rabinowitz for coming forward to do this.

Council Member Halstead then thanked the Council for allocating the funding for the Poli-Majestic Theatre.

Council Member E. Martinez then asked the BOE to submit a quarterly report to the Council.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

CITY COUNCIL VOTE NUMBER - 71-14 (d)

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED THE FOLLOWING ITEM:**

Budget & Appropriations Committee Vote of General Fund Appropriation Decreases

There are adjustments to the Mayor's Recommended Budget for general fund purposes as detailed by the City Council Budget & Appropriations Committee.

Org#	Org Description	APPR. UNIT	Object Description	2016		CHANGE
				MAYOR PROPOSED	2016 BAC APPROVED	
01075000	HEALTH BENEFIT ADMINISTRATION	03FB 01075	HEALTH BENEFITS FRINGE BENEFITS	13,073,227	12,859,028	-214,199
01250000	POLICE ADMINISTRATION	02FB 01250	POLICE OTHER PERSONNEL SVCS	24,999,029	24,730,829	-268,200
01250000	POLICE ADMINISTRATION	02FB 01250	POLICE OTHER PERSONNEL SVCS	24,730,829	24,477,758	-253,071
01600000	DEBT SERVICE	06FU 01600	OTHER FINANCING OTHER FIN USES	3,385,777	3,075,778	-309,999
	Total Appropriation Decreases			66,188,862	65,143,393	-1,045,469

LEGISLATIVE INTENT APPROPRIATION DECREASES

01075 03FB01075 - The legislative intent is to decrease the values in the Health Benefit account relative to retiree health claim projection for FY 2016.

01250 02FB01250 - The legislative intent is to decrease the value in the Police Department Administration fringe benefit category for City's share of vacant positions pension contribution. Benefits are funded for one half of the full fiscal year need.

01250 02FB01250 - The legislative intent is to decrease the value in the Police Department Administration fringe benefit account for City's share of vacant positions health insurance. Benefits are funded for one half of the full fiscal year need.

01600 06FU01600 - The legislative intent is to decrease the value in the Debt Service account for finance charges and interest fees associated with FY 2015-16 potential borrowing. Potential to reduce short term borrowing to one transaction will reduce these expenses.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

CITY COUNCIL VOTE NUMBER – 71-14 (e)

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNELLY MOVED THE FOLLOWING ITEM:**

Budget & Appropriations Committee Vote of General Fund Budget

OVERALL TOTAL

DESCRIPTION	2016 MAYOR PROPOSED	BAC PROPOSED INCREASES	BAC PROPOSED DECREASES	BAC ADOPTED BUDGET
REVENUES				
ALL GENERAL FUND REVENUES	\$532,066,279	\$303,930		\$532,370,209
TOTAL COUNCIL ADOPTED REVENUES	\$532,066,279	\$303,930		\$532,370,209
APPROPRIATIONS				
ALL OTHER GENERAL FUND	\$532,066,279	\$1,349,399	-\$1,045,469	\$532,370,209
TOTAL COUNCIL ADOPTED APPROPRIATIONS	\$532,066,279	\$1,349,399	-\$1,045,469	\$532,370,209
NET BUDGET SURPLUS / (SHORTAGE)		1,045,469	-1,045,469	

**** COUNCIL MEMBER VIZZO-PANICCIA SECONDED THE MOTION.**

Council Member Brannelly then thanked the Budget Committee for their dedication to the task. She said that they came to understand the nature of the City's expenses and added that she was proud of what they were able to do for the Board of Education.

She publicly thanked Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia for organizing the Council Pot Luck dinners that brought the Council Members together during the budget process.

Council Member Brannelly then spoke about the municipal IDs and said that it was important for the undocumented residents to be protected. She added that she had a family member who was working on this in New York and that there was an actual waiting list for people to make appointments to come in for IDs.

Council Member Brannelly commented about Council Member Halstead's request for the local theaters and how this was needed.

Council Member Brannelly said that the Committee had held four public hearings and that there was almost no feedback from the residents regarding their needs.

Council Member Brannelly mentioned moving forward. She said that there were only two means for increasing revenue. One is to raise taxes and fees and the other is to expand the tax base. The Committee is looking at developing a new method of taxation where the owners of vacant properties are taxed the same as those who own parcels with buildings on them.

She briefly mentioned the fact that the City does not receive an equal portion of the budget from Hartford.

Council Member Swain said that "Moving forward, the City and Council will both be well served if we had an unbiased consultant that could help us during the budget process to ask the right questions and help us to understand the answers given by the administration. Furthermore, this consultant would not need to be an additional burden to the tax payers as there is already money in the legislative budget for such a position."

Council Member Lyons said that in reference to two lines regarding the blight finances that the budget committee would be looking into drafting a resolution where the funding for blight would be clarified.

Council President McCarthy thanked Council Member Brannelly and Council Member Marella for all their hard work with the budget. He added that Mr. Sherwood had also worked very hard on this.

Council Member Martinez said that the group would be working on a draft for the municipal ID and invited everyone to join them in moving this idea through the process.

Council Member Torres said that he supported the school nurses. However, the Council was focusing on three issues like the nurses, but the Council would be approving a budget of half a million dollars. He said that while he likes Mr. Sherwood, there should be an independent analysis of the budget to advise the Budget Committee. He said that the Council had not truly done their jobs. They were voting blindly.

Council Member Torres said that there were 67 police officers that were being approved so that the Federal Government won't penalize the City. Mr. Sherwood was apparently a rain maker.

Council Member Torres said that the cost of gasoline had come down but the cost remained steady. He said that he would be voting against the budget because he felt that there was not enough detail.

The Mayor said that he was pleased with the work done by Mr. Sherwood and Mr. Nunn. The City expanded the tax base and the grand list.

Council Member Vizzo-Paniccia said that she was on the Budget Committee and started the pot lucks so that the Council members would come to the meeting to hear about what the Budget Committee was doing.

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE VOTE OF GENERAL FUND BUDGET OVERALL TOTAL PASSED WITH EIGHTEEN (18) IN FAVOR (BRANNELLY, BANTA, TAYLOR-MOYE, SWAIN, MCCARTHY,**

AUSTIN, LYONS, VIZZO-PANICCIA, MCBRIDE-LEE, SALTER, CASCO, CASTILLO, L. MARTINEZ, FELICIANO, MARELLA, JACKSON, E. MARTINEZ AND HOLLOWAY) AND TWO (2) OPPOSED (TORRES AND HALSTEAD).

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL PRESIDENT MCCARTHY MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AUSTIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services